

losses, declining personal incomes, diminishing home values, and the highest unemployment rate in the Nation, sadly. By proposing a massive \$3,000 per taxpayer tax increase, Democrats in this Congress are following the same failed blueprint that has threatened to ditch our economy in Michigan and destroy Michigan jobs.

Instead of working on tax hikes that ultimately make America less competitive, I believe Congress should stop this \$683 billion money grab from taxpayers. Congress could better spend time eliminating ineffective and inefficient government programs, making health care more affordable, and passing any energy legislation to move America toward energy independence and reduce energy prices.

The debate over whether to raise taxes is just the beginning of a long battle over America's economic future. By making tax relief permanent and continuing to grow our economy, Congress can go an awful long way to restore the trust of the American people, build a better and brighter future for our country, and avoid the economic suffering now felt in States like Michigan.

It doesn't have to be that way. And I certainly appreciate the fact that there are those of us who are fighting for taxpayers' interests. I know the 13 of us who came in as freshmen came in for a reason. That is the smallest freshman class in the history of the United States, probably. But we came in resolute that the taxpayer was to be served; that taxpayers were paying too much, not too little; that we were regulating too much, not too little; that we were destroying the incentives of private hard-working citizens, risk takers, entrepreneurs to do the job that they can only do. Government doesn't do that. And that is why 13 of us came while others lost and weren't sent back because of overspending and overtaxing.

And it is sure a privilege to join with the both of you here in the room tonight. I guess I would offer opportunity for any final comments before we are forced to close this interesting conversation this evening, hopefully of benefit to the taxpayers out there on this eve of tax freedom day. Hopefully it has been interesting, but more than that, it has been something that would stir them into action as well to say: Enough is enough, and we stand for freedom.

Mrs. BACHMANN. If the gentleman would yield. I want to thank you for your wonderful words and your eloquent statement and your deep passion that you have stated. And you are again to be commended for the Tax Increase Prevention Act. Thank you for doing that, and for putting this evening together to let the American taxpayer know that tomorrow is a day of freedom, but it is also a day of reality to realize, finally, that we are going to be able to take off our ball and chain and be unshackled and finally

breathe again and be able to work for ourselves.

But when Americans go to the pump tomorrow, I just want to remind them, Congressman WALBERG, when they go to the pump and they put \$1 worth of gasoline in their vehicle, over 60 cents of that dollar will go to taxes in one form or another. Just think about that. We hear a lot about oil companies and about profits, but when you have \$1 of gasoline, over 60 cents of that dollar goes to taxes. That is something we really need to think about here in Congress. We need to consider it. It is just a microcosm, just a picture of the heavy tax burden every day that impacts the average American. I can't thank you enough for putting this together this evening.

Mr. WALBERG. I thank my friend from Minnesota, and appreciate your passion as well in fighting this good fight.

I would yield now to the Congressman from Tennessee, DAVID DAVIS.

Mr. DAVID DAVIS of Tennessee. Thank you, Mr. WALBERG. Thank you for your leadership. I would like to thank Mrs. BACHMANN for your interest in this, your hard work here in Congress.

I really appreciate your leadership in this and understanding that you can't tax and spend and regulate yourself into prosperity. The American people understand it. It is a simple principle. We need to start thinking outside the Beltway, not inside the Beltway. And if we do those things with lower taxes, lower spending, we will actually start to produce energy in America again, start to use American oil and American coal, safe nuclear, those things to bring down the energy costs. If we bring those taxes, those regulations down, then the American people will go out there and have those jobs. The best economic stimulus package in America is a good paycheck. And thank you for your leadership.

Mr. WALBERG. I thank the gentleman from Tennessee. And, again, I trust this has been helpful for taxpayers to hear at least some that will defend. And there are others in this Congress. It has been said that we are red state, blue state, totally divided in this country. When you get to the common-sense issues, the virtues that people see as common sense, we are not divided, we are not red state, blue state. We are a common based unified people that believe in common sense things.

Jonathan Witherspoon, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, said: A Republic once equally poised must either preserve its virtue or lose its liberty. Virtue of hard work, the virtue of risk taking and entrepreneurial spirit, the virtue of accountability, of responsibility, of honesty, of integrity, those are virtues. And they go all into what makes our country great and what our taxpayers generally commit themselves to on a common base. And when we break down those virtues and give those away, we de-

stroy ourselves and our liberty in the process.

So let's fight together to stop this \$683 billion tax grab that will frustrate this country and take it back as opposed to pressing it forward. I thank my colleagues for spending this time with me tonight.

I yield back the balance of my time.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. ABERCROMBIE (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. CARNEY (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today on account of Pennsylvania primary.

Mr. DOGGETT (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today and the balance of the week on account of medical reasons.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for today.

Mr. CLYBURN (at the request of Mr. HOYER) for April 23 on account of two funerals in his district.

Mr. CAMPBELL of California (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today and the balance of the week on account of personal reasons.

Mr. WELLER of Illinois (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. YOUNG of Florida (at the request of Mr. BOEHNER) for today on account of attending the funeral of a soldier who died in Operation Enduring Freedom.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Ms. KAPTUR) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DEFazio, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. KAPTUR, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. MCDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Ms. SOLIS, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mrs. BLACKBURN) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, today and April 23 and 24.

Mr. FRANKS of Arizona, for 5 minutes, today and April 23 and 24.

Mr. POE, for 5 minutes, April 29.

Mrs. BLACKBURN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BISHOP of Utah, for 5 minutes, April 29.

Mr. ROYCE, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. JONES of North Carolina, for 5 minutes, April 29.

Mr. DENT, for 5 minutes, April 23.

Mr. GINGREY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. WALDEN of Oregon, for 5 minutes, today.